so, found themselves waiting about for weeks, without work or wages. The effect was, of course, to check voluntary enrolment. Mean-
Muddleand time the War Office was complaining
confusion that it was not getting the men which it had been promised under the scheme.
Nothing like the full number of recruits that had been promised from Agriculture, Railways, Mines and Munitions in January were actually forthcoming by the end of May. Nor, on the other hand, was the substitute labour and the assistance from the forces of the Home Defence Army which had been promised to agriculture actually furnished on the agreed scale.
Voluntary enrolment was definitely disappointing.
Of those who put down their names, three-fifths were
*M*aere* already engaged in work of vital impor-
response to tance, and less than half of the remainder
appeal for were suitable for employment in the
volunteers ^^ for which workers were most needed by the country. Mr. Chamberlain had appealed in the first instance for the enrolment of at least half a million men. After two months, less than a third of this number had been obtained.
On 17th April, 1917, Mr. Bridgeman stated in Parliament in reply to a question :—

" Out of 163,161 Volunteers dealt with by the Employment Exchanges up to 6th April (the latest date for which complete figures are available),

93,622 were definitely known to be in trades of primary importance or otherwise not available for various reasons ; 26,873 out of the balance of 69,539 were, from experience or physique, *prima facie* suitable for work in trades of primary importance in which there is a considerable demand